

Washington, D.C. Yesterday, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia voided a 2003 agreement between the state of Georgia and the Army Corps of Engineers which allowed the state 65% more water out of Lake Lanier for use in metro Atlanta. The three-judge panel voided the agreement because the Corps did not have Congressional approval which, under federal law, first must be obtained for changes in the management of federal reservoirs.

Congressman Sanford Bishop, Representative from Georgia's Second Congressional District, released the following statement in response to the ruling:

"With a hastily adopted water plan passed by the General Assembly last week, the ongoing negotiations between Georgia, Florida, and Alabama, and a persistent, damaging drought, the Court's ruling is timely. Lake Lanier not only provides drinking water to north Georgia, but provides downstream flows for myriad purposes to a large portion of the rest of the state. Downstream Georgia communities have similar concerns to Alabama and Florida – and deserve to be heard amid the din of their seemingly loud and greedy upstream neighbors. The Congressional approval requirement will at least ensure all interests are heard."

"Hopefully, downstream Georgia communities from West Point Lake to Lake Seminole will not have their needs trampled without due consideration in a stampede to protect unrestricted and unplanned growth in water use of the northern part of the state."